

CAMBRIDGE TOURS · FREE MINI HUNT

Cambridge in Five Clues

A free thirty-minute taster hunt around King's Parade. Five clues, one small loop, several hundred years of genius and mischief. Print it or follow on your phone.



All ages

30-40 minutes

600 m loop

Completely free

A free taster from our full treasure hunt collection · cambridge.tours

How it works

Start on King's Parade at the corner of Bene't Street, by the golden clock. Follow the five stops in order — each is a minute or two from the last. Answers are on the last page, with no judgement if you peek. Everything is visible from the street, free, at any hour.

The five clues

1 The golden clock

King's Parade, corner of Bene't Street — a rippled gold disc behind glass.

CLUE

This clock has no hands and no numbers, and the monstrous insect riding it swallows every minute as it passes — its inventor called it the *Chronophage*, the time-eater. Watch it snap its jaws on the minute. **Question: what kind of creature is it?**

2 The oldest thing in the county

A few steps down Bene't Street, on your left: a rough stone church tower.

CLUE

This tower was standing before the Normans invaded — roughly a thousand years old, the oldest structure in Cambridgeshire. **Question: the round holes near the top were left for which useful, mouse-hunting birds?** (A guess is allowed. The truth is written in the answers.)

3 The pub that changed biology

Almost opposite the tower: an old coaching inn with a courtyard.

CLUE

One lunchtime in 1953, two scientists marched in here and told the whole pub they had found “the secret of life”. They were barely exaggerating. **Question: what had they discovered?**

4 The show-off gatehouse

Walk back up King's Parade, heading north: the great stone screen and gatehouse of King's College.

CLUE

Crowns, roses, dragons, greyhounds — this screen is a Tudor billboard, announcing exactly who paid for the chapel behind it. **Question: find a Tudor rose and a crown in one view. Which royal dynasty is doing the showing-off?**

5 The building everyone graduates in

A few steps further north: the white classical building behind the lawn and railings.

CLUE

Every Cambridge degree for nearly three centuries has been conferred here, in Latin, in a gown. In 1958, engineering students put something extraordinary on its roof overnight. **Question: what was it?** (Hint: it had four wheels.)

Answers

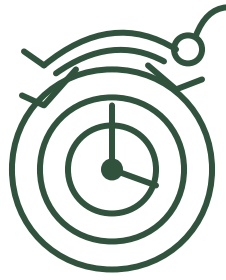
1. A grasshopper — the Corpus Clock (2008), which runs deliberately erratically because, says its inventor, time itself does.

2. Owls. St Bene't's Saxon tower (11th century) has round openings said to have welcomed owls in to keep the mice down.

3. The structure of DNA — the double helix. Crick and Watson announced it in The Eagle on 28 February 1953.

4. The Tudors — Henry VII and Henry VIII stamped the dynasty's badges across King's screen and gatehouse.

5. An Austin Seven van, hoisted onto the Senate House roof by night in June 1958. It took nearly a week to remove.



That was five minutes of Cambridge. There are hours more.

The Grasshopper's Secret — our full family treasure hunt: 12 stops, junior and chief detective challenges, and a nine-letter mystery to unscramble. Also available entirely **en français** — the only French treasure hunt in Cambridge.

The Night Climbers' Cipher — the after-dark puzzle trail for friends, with four pub safe houses.

The Cambridge Challenge — the self-run team competition for workplaces.

Get any hunt at cambridge.tours — code HUNT10 for 10% off

© Cambridge Tours — local guided walks, photography tours and city games, in English and French.
Share this free sample with anyone you like. That's what it's for.